

memorandum



**Whitlock & Weinberger
Transportation, Inc.**

475 14th Street
Suite 290
Oakland, CA 94612

voice (510) 444-2600

website www.w-trans.com
email mspencer@w-trans.com

Date: April 28, 2014

To: **Ms. Bozhena Palatnik** From: Mark Spencer
City of Belmont
Public Works Department Project: BLM001

Subject: Ralston Avenue Corridor Study and Improvements –
City Council Study Session and Open House Meeting Notes

The purpose of this memorandum is to summarize the City Council Study Session and Open House held at City Hall in Belmont on April 8, 2014.

I. Attendance

The open house began at 6:00 p.m. At the beginning of the City Council Study Session (6:30 p.m.) there were about 40 people in attendance other than city staff and consultants.

2. Meeting Presentation and City Council Comments

The meeting began with opening remarks Public Works Director Afshin Oskoui. This was followed by a presentation by Mark Spencer of W-Trans that included a summary of the public engagement process and the recommended Ralston Avenue corridor plan. He noted that this is a community-driven and balanced plan, and outlined the current vehicular, bicycle and pedestrian volumes, as well as collision data. He briefly described the four segments of the study, some of the suggested options, and the associated costs for implementing solutions within each segment. Mr. Spencer concluded his presentation by indicating that the overarching goal of the corridor plan is safety, and he noted the safety elements included in the plan (road diets and narrowing of lanes, traffic signals and traffic signal timing plans, enhanced crosswalks, sidewalk improvements, and bicycle lane improvements on and off of Ralston Avenue).

Following the presentation, City Council members gave direction to the consultants and made their initial comments. These included:

Direction for next steps:

1. Although there has been extensive community engagement, additional public outreach may be appropriate.
2. Prioritization of components of the plan would be helpful.
3. The feasibility of bringing a multi-use path through Twin Pines Park should be further explored.
4. Based on feedback received to date, the consultant should tabulate key concerns and list why/why not the concern or particular treatment was recommended or not recommended.

General comments:

1. What can we do to reduce speeds on “Upper Ralston?”
2. To what extent is there cut-through traffic on Ralston?
3. Daily traffic volumes of 25,000-40,000 vehicles per day seems high in a city that only has 26,000 residents
4. What had been the response from bike coalitions and advocacy groups?

3. Public Comments

1. Continual bike lanes are important
2. Ralston Ave is a challenging street. Likes the plan overall. Not everyone will be 100% happy. Taking travel lane not ok on upper Ralston Ave.
3. Concern about bicycling in the downtown area. Parallel routes are ok for some but some want to stay on Ralston. Liked the idea of bike lanes from Twin Pines Park to Ralston Ave to Alameda de las Pulgas.
4. Notre Dame University access needs to be further explored if there is to be a roundabout.
5. Most collisions are downtown. Safety concerns are the most important and he didn't see the changes to safety.
6. Speed limit should be 35 mph between Alameda de las Pulgas and SR92. Gave examples of Farm Hill Blvd and Trousdale Blvd as examples.
7. A resident with small children says they like the plan and they appreciate converting the all-way STOP control to a traffic signal at South Road.
8. A long-time resident who is a bicyclist noted that they like a lot of the plan. But they want bike lanes from Alameda de las Pulgas to SR92 and a 35mph speed limit on upper Ralston Avenue.
9. Flashing crosswalk lights can lead to dangerous behavior. A pedestrian may activate the flashers and then not look for cars that don't yield.
10. A resident near Ralston Middle School noted that school signs are not present on Ralston. Also, we don't need landscaping but we need bike lanes, and a continuous sidewalk on the north side.

4. Meeting Wrap-Up

To maintain the meeting schedule as well as the 7:30 p.m. start time of their regularly scheduled City Council Meeting, the City Council invited attendees to provide any further comments at their regularly scheduled meeting later that evening. Several members of the public provided comments in the City Council meeting (those comments are included in the Public Comments noted above).

The City Council later reiterated their four main points of direction for next steps to City staff and the consultants during their regular meeting.



RALSTON AVENUE CORRIDOR STUDY

COUNCIL STUDY SESSION *Tuesday,*

April 8, 2014

*The City has embarked on a mobility assessment for Ralston Avenue from State Route 92 in the west to U.S. Highway 101 in the east. **The goal of the project is to identify key short-term and long-term transportation projects that will address walkability, bicycling, access to transit and traffic flow along the corridor.** As this corridor is diverse in pedestrian activity, traffic patterns and community character, the corridor has been broken into three distinct zones. By breaking the corridor down, the community and project team can focus on the specific issues within each area.*

Visit the website below for information on upcoming meetings, background documents, and other opportunities to share your thoughts.

ralstonavenuecorridorstudy.org

The Belmont City Council and Public Works Department invite you to attend the City Council Study Session for the Ralston Avenue Corridor Study.

During the first community meeting in April 2013, we heard from the community about the challenges and opportunities for improvement along Ralston Avenue. At the workshop in September 2013 we heard community ideas and preferences on the potential improvement concepts. During the third workshop in February 2014 we shared the Draft Conceptual Improvements Plan and gathered community input.

The purpose of the City Council Study Session is to provide an update on the progress of the Ralston Avenue Study, and to seek City Council feedback and direction to finalize the Draft Conceptual Improvement Plans.

Please join us on:

Tuesday, April 8, 2014

6:00 p.m.-6:30 p.m. Public Open House
6:30 p.m.-7:30 p.m. Council Study Session

Belmont City Hall
2nd Floor, EOC Room
One Twin Pines Lane; Belmont, CA 94002

We want to hear from you!